



## HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Mrs.J.Kingston

5<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you are continuing to manage as well as can be expected in these difficult times. Only one more week of home schooling for those pupils working at home and then, I hope you will be able to get some down time in the half term holiday. Schools are not open to any pupils over the half term holiday and remote learning will not be set during this time. We also have an INSET day booked for Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February as staff are completing training on strategies for improving the attainment of pupils with specific SENDs.

This week I school we have been thinking specifically about how to improve children's mental health and we appreciate that this is a very difficult time for all children. It is difficult for those at home who are missing the routine of school and their friends, and it is difficult for children in school who may be worried about being away from their parents all day or worried about their parents at work. Many of our families are doing a wonderful job as key workers and we would like to say thank you to all of you who are helping others at this difficult time. I would especially like to say thank you to all the hospital and care home workers who are going above and beyond what is usually expected of you. We appreciate all you do very much.

### **Schools full re-opening update:**

Infection and death rates are finally falling but the rates are still higher than they were in the first wave so I am sure we all understand the government's cautious attitude to re-opening schools. The hope continues to be able to begin reopening schools **from 8<sup>th</sup> March**.

I still do not have any further information about how school will re-open. For example, we do not know if all schools will open at once or if particular year groups will be prioritised. I will let you know as soon as we have any further information.

The current system of remote learning will continue for those working at home after the February half term until all pupils are able to return to school.

Free school meal vouchers will continue to be provided for those who are entitled to them, Bristol City Council have made a commitment to provide free school meals vouchers during the half term holiday period. If you need any further support with food parcels, please contact Miss Sims.



## **Remote learning:**

We are continuing to see very successful home learning for all pupils who are unable to attend school due to the current government restrictions. Our staff have worked tirelessly to ensure a broad range of learning opportunities for pupils that are accessible to all. We have had some lovely feedback about children enjoying the live lessons that teachers are providing as well as using the White Rose Maths Videos to support Maths.

As part of the duty to provide remote learning provision, we are also required to record levels of engagement in learning. We recognise that families are facing a range of pressures and challenges at the moment and it is not always possible to complete all of the work all of the time. That said, it is helpful for us to have some indication each day that work has been undertaken. This could be simply a picture uploaded to class dojo or a comment on Google Classroom. We also urge you to join the Google Live Lessons wherever possible. This is a fantastic opportunity for the children to see their teachers and their peers, and also be guided on the work being completed. For those children in EYFS and Y1, you can show us you are engaging in the work with your child by liking the post the class teacher puts on.

If you need some additional support to enable your child to access the remote learning, please contact either your child's class teacher or Miss Sims at the school office and we will do what we can to help. Please be aware that if we get to the end of the week and a child has not engaged in any learning at all, you may receive an email or phone call from a member of the Senior Leadership team.

As well as the majority of children accessing their work through Google classroom, work will continue to be uploaded onto each class webpage and paper copies made available from the Office. All work for EYFS and Y1 will continue to be uploaded to Tapestry, until school re-opens fully.

Alongside the online activities being provided teachers are being given time to call those pupils who are not in school to speak to them. If they have not managed to speak to your child and haven't seen them engaging with the work, you will be sent a text from the Office to contact us so we know you are ok.

We have now distributed our full initial allocation of laptops/i-pads from the DFE to those families who requested one. We are very fortunate that one of the parishioners very kindly donated nearly £900 pounds to the school to buy extra laptops and they are now on order. If you still need help with technology at home, please contact Miss Sims and we will add your name to the waiting list. We have also been informed today by the DFE that we will be able to order more laptops from next week.

If you have any further suggestions of good remote learning practice, please do not hesitate to ring me to discuss. We have sent out a survey with this newsletter to gain your views and see if we can improve further next term.



### **Reading books:**

It has been good to see parents and children collecting reading books from school this week. Each class has been allocated a day and time to collect them. Unfortunately, given the current lockdown situation, children are not able to browse through the books at the moment. Class teachers will arrange for 2/3 books for you to collect. You will need to inform your child's teacher in advance, if you require books, by Class Dojo, Tapestry or Google Classroom. All books will need to be returned the following week, and the books will then be quarantined for 72 hours before we can give them to other children.

Please see the times below:

**Reception - Friday - 09.30am - 10.00am**

**Year 1 - Friday - 10.00am - 10.30am**

**Year 2 - Friday - 11.00am - 11.30am**

**Year 3 - Thursday - 09.30am - 10.00am**

**Year 4 - Thursday - 10.00am - 10.30am**

**Year 5 - Thursday - 11.00am - 11.30am**

**Year 6 - Thursday - 11.30am - 12.00pm**

### **Coronavirus update:**

For those pupils attending school, it is vitally important that you do not send your child into school if they are unwell. This is as many children in each bubble have parents who are critical workers and they would not be able to attend work if their child developed symptoms after contact with someone who was unwell and later tested positive for coronavirus.

As the weather continues to be cold, please do not send your child into school with a cough, even if you think it is because of a cold. They will need to have a negative test result to be able to return to school.

We are very lucky that, so far, we have been able to keep all the bubbles open but are aware that this may change at any moment.

This week we began the rapid COVID home testing scheme for school staff, introduced by the NHS and the DFE. All staff, who wish, will test themselves for Covid twice a week before coming into school. This is to help identify any people who currently have the virus but have no symptoms. The government currently estimate this 1 in every 3 people. As you can imagine, this has its pros and cons! It is a very welcome step for us working in school as we are able to protect your children, each other and both sets of families by not coming into work and unknowingly spreading the virus. However, it may mean that staffing levels are

such that it would not be safe to open some or all classes if a large number of staff test positive as a result.



At times when the rooms are being ventilated, your child may feel colder than usual in school and so they are able to wear an extra layer on top, such as a zip up hoodie/cardigan/sleeveless jacket that does not have to be school uniform.

As always, thank you for your understanding and support. Please take care of yourselves and your families.

Be kind to yourselves and stay safe,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwAYpLVyeFU&safe=active>



Mrs Kingston

**Key Dates:**

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February – End of Term 3

Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February – Inset Day

Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February – Start of Term 4

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March – Secondary School Offer Day

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March – World Book Day

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April – End of Term 4

